

PLAY THE DREYDL GAME



The word “dreydl” comes from the Yiddish word “dreyen” which means to twist or to turn – so it’s no wonder that this great little spinning top is called by that name. The dreydl (also written as dreydel, dreidl or dreidel) has four sides, each bearing a letter in Hebrew.

HERE’S HOW THE GAME IS PLAYED

Players start with a small pile of treats or goodies. In the early days, this probably meant things like walnuts, small candies or a wonderful little chocolate coins called “Hanukkah gelt” (Hanukkah money). Then each player takes their turn and spins the dreydl. What appears on the face will tell them what to do next.

HERE’S WHAT THE LETTERS MEAN

The letters make a reference to the miracle that happened at Hanukkah. So, if you read the letters from right to left, you see this message:

Sham (or Shin)	There (meaning it happened there in Israel)
Haya (or Hay)	Happened
Gadol (or Gimel)	Great
Nes (or Nun)	Miracle

Each letter also tells you what to do:

Nes (or Nun)	Do nothing, pass your turn
Sham (or Shin)	Add one treat to the pot
Haya (or Hay)	Get half the pot
Gadol (or Gimel)	Get everything in the pot



WHAT HAPPENED AT HANUKKAH

Hanukkah (or Chanukah) is an eight day celebration known as the festival of lights. The story behind the miracle of the festival of lights is beautiful one. If you don’t know it already, check it out online or through books and don’t forget to explore the delicious foods that are traditional to make and eat this time of year, like potato latkes (pancakes) and sufganiot (deep-fried doughnuts).